



# Department of Justice

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Date: November 2, 2001**

**WWW.USDOJ.GOV**

**(202) 514-2007**

**TDD (202) 514-1888**

## **JUSTICE DEPARTMENT INVITES PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **--September 11 Victim Compensation Program--**

WASHINGTON – On Monday, November 5, the Justice Department will publish in the Federal Register a Notice of Inquiry and Advanced Notice of Rulemaking relating to a program established to compensate victims of the September 11 terrorist-related aircraft crashes. Attorney General John D. Ashcroft considers the Program a high priority for the Department and has ordered this notice to seek public input on the development of substantive and procedural rules to govern the administration of the Program.

On September 22, 2001, the President signed into law the "September 11 Victim Compensation Fund," established by Congress in the Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act. The purpose of this Program is to provide compensation to eligible individuals who were "physically injured" or, in the case of deceased persons, the "personal representative" of the eligible person killed as a result of the terrorist-related aircraft crashes of September 11.

The Attorney General, acting through a Special Master yet to be appointed, is responsible for administration of the Program, including decisions on the forms to be used, the information to be included in such forms, procedures for hearings and the presentation of evidence, and other procedures to assist individuals in filing and pursuing claims under the Program. The Attorney General is continuing to interview highly credentialed candidates for the Special Master post and expects to make the appointment in the coming weeks.

All the while, the Department has maintained frequent communication with Congressional staffers regarding the structure of the program and will continue to consult with

Congress as the process unfolds. The Department also has received valuable input and information from state and local officials in New York and Virginia and from Pentagon officials, as well as other federal agencies. The Department also acknowledges valuable input from many other groups, including organizations representing victims, the American Bar Association, the American Trial Lawyers Association, employers with businesses in the World Trade Center and representatives of the airline and insurance industries.

By law, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Special Master, must establish regulations to govern the Program, which is designed to provide a no-fault alternative to tort litigation, by December 21, 2001. A claimant who files for compensation under the Program waives any right to file a civil action (or be a party to an action) for damages sustained as a result of the terrorist-related aircraft crashes of September 11. Claims under the Program must be filed on or before two years after the initial regulations are promulgated and all payments from the Program are made by the United States Government.

The Department considers it very important that the public be fully involved in the development of any rules established under the program through public comment within the deadlines set by Congress. Therefore, the Department has issued a Notice of Inquiry and Advance Notice of Rulemaking to obtain as much public comment as feasible before regulations are issued by December 21, 2001, as required by law.

Comments from the public should be submitted to:

Kenneth L. Zwick, Director  
Office of Management Programs  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Division  
Main Building, Room 3140  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530  
Telephone: 888-714-3385 (toll free) or (202) 305-1352  
TDD: 888-560-0844  
Telefax: 301-519-5956  
E-mail: [victimcomp.comments@usdoj.gov](mailto:victimcomp.comments@usdoj.gov)

In view of the short time period for comments and current delays in the delivery of the mail in some areas, the Department recommends that comments be submitted by e-mail or telefax, if possible. Telefaxes should be limited to 15 pages. All comments received will become public records. The name and address of the person commenting should be included with all submissions. The text of the comments, along with the name and address of the person commenting, will be available on the Program web site, [www.usdoj.gov/victimcompensation](http://www.usdoj.gov/victimcompensation).

#####